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# FIVE FOOLS

When the King of Sind died, his son Mandukavarma ascended the throne. He was not a very bright fellow. In fact, he was a bit of a dunce. His minister was no better. In their hands, naturally the land did not prosper.

The old king had been served by a clever minister called Gunasila, who on the death of his master had retired to the forest. Therefore there was no one to advise a first rate fool like Mandukavarma.

The young king's wife was a veritable doubting thomas. She contributed not a little to the general muddle by raising all kinds of doubts about the policies and decisions of the ruler. Thus a land which had

enjoyed a modicum of prosperity under the old ruler now began to slide.

One day, the queen said to her husband, "Lord, I have often heard people use the word 'Fools'. That too, when you and I enter the court, the courtiers whisper this word loudly. "Who are these fools? Where do they live? Do you know?"

The king replied, "True. I have also heard them repeat this word endlessly. I shall enquire about this matter."

Then he sent for his minister and asked him who these Fools were. The minister replied, Sire, I too have heard of them. But don't know where they live."

The king said, "Well, you



must find out. The Queen is most anxious to see these Fools. As you are my minister you must do your duty. If you don't produce Five Fools within a week, your head will roll on the ground."

The poor minister was alarmed. As he was himself a great fool, he did not quite know what a Fool was. The more he thought about it the more nervous he became. At last he decided to run off into the forest to escape the king's wrath. Just then he remembered Gunasila, the former minister, who lived in the forest. Why, he would be able to tell him all about the Five Fools.

So picking up courage he went into the forest and saw the hermit deep in meditation.

When Gunasila opened his eyes, he saw the minister standing before him. He looked enquiringly at him. Whereupon the latter fell at his feet and implored him to save him.

"Oh! Holy Sir, the king has ordered me to find Five Fools. I don't know where such people live. You must help me or I'll lose my head."

Gunasila was highly amused by this. So he answered, "Very well. I'll help you. Come with me to the city. You might find them on the way. After all, in your land,





you won't lack for fools."

Happily the two of them set out from the hermitage. On the way they saw a hut burning in the front. They also noticed a man putting the rear portion of the hut to the torch. Gunasila accosted him and said, "My good man, instead of putting the fire out, you are burning the back also. Why do you do that?"

The former replied, "Sir, I live here. Haven't you heard of the proverb that fire must be put out by fire. After all diamond cuts diamond. That's why I am burning the rear portion of my cottage."

Gunasila said, "Fine. You're just the man I want. Come with me to the king. You will be richly rewarded."

So the former went with them. The three of them neared a village and noticed that a man was drawing water from the village well only to pour it into his own well.

Gunasila asked him what he did. So that householder said, "Sir! During the summer, my well dries up. That's why I am storing water now. At least I don't have to wander around with my pitcher."

Gunasila laughed and said,

"Good. You are just the man the king fancies. Come with us and you'll be richly rewarded."

Then they reached the capital. Gunasila turned to the minister and said, "Come, let us now go and meet the king."

"But Sir," protested the minister. "We have found only two Fools. We need three more."

"Don't worry," said Gunasila. "I shall point out three more at the court."

When they were ushered in the presence of the king, the latter asked the minister, "Well, have you found the Five Fools?"

The minister replied, "Sire, I have found two with the aid of Gunasila, the former minister. He has promised to point out three more here in the court."

Manduka said, "Oh! Is that so? Good. If he can't produce three more, his head, and not yours will roll on the ground."

Then Gunasila saying, "Well, here are the first two Fools," recounted the foolish ways of the former and the householder. The whole court burst out with a chorus of "Fools, Fools," at the end of the recital. So





Manduka said, "Very well. You have proved that these two are Fools. But what about the rest?"

Gunasila said, "The minister who ran round without knowing the meaning of the word Fool is one. Your Queen who wanted to know what a Fool was is another. You are the third Fool for having listened to her foolish prattle. Therefore, I have shown you all the Five Fools demanded by you."

Again the court burst out with a loud chorus of "Fools, Fools." "Oh! Were they happy that their king had been shown up for the fool that he

really was!"

King Manduka turned the colour of beet at the words of Gunasila. But he dared not show his anger in public. After all his own courtiers had accepted the proof of foolishness in some men. So he turned round to Gunasila and said, "Sir, come back and serve me as a minister."

But Gunasila refusing the offer, said, "Manduka, don't ever express a desire to see Fools. Put an end to your own foolishness, and rule wisely."

Then he went away to his hermitage deep in the forest.



# THE STORY OF THE COVER

## GULLIVER IN LILLIPUT

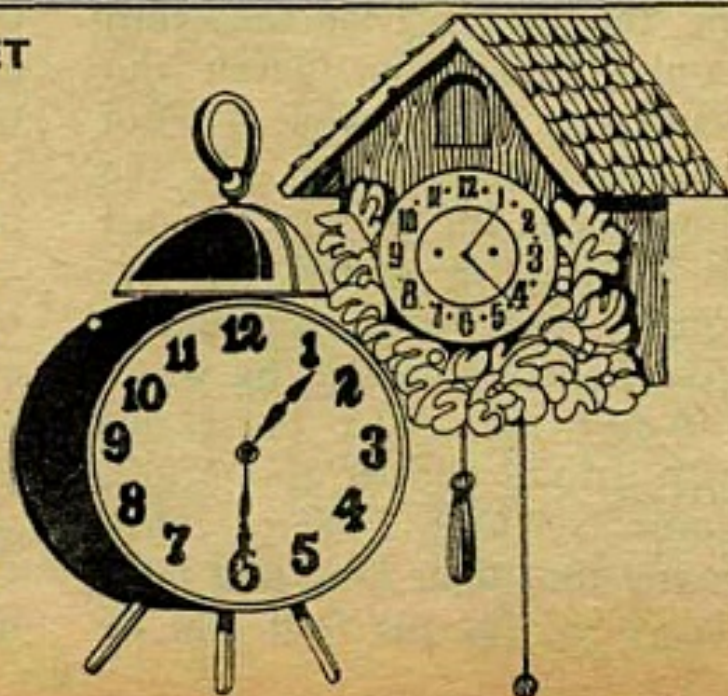


**MAN MOUNTAIN!** That's what Gulliver seemed to the little people of Lilliput when he landed on their island in the Indian Ocean—for they were only six inches tall! Gulliver's travels took him to many strange places, like Lilliput, where he quickly made friends with the tiny folk who loved to 'roller-coast' down his body and swing from his boots, while the children played hide-and-seek in his hair. It seems a fantastic tale, and it is—for *Gulliver's Travels* is a famous adventure story by Jonathan Swift, an author with a fantastic imagination!

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### HOW DID THE CLOCK GET ITS NAME?

In olden days, when clocks were described as time-pieces, they were always fitted with bells which chimed the hours. They were made mostly in Germany and the German word for bell is *glocke*. The medieval Dutch word was *clocke*. So the time-pieces gradually came to be known as clocks although not many clocks these days, have bells.







# THE FAIRY LIZARD

Once upon a time, in a far-away land, there lived a poor peasant farmer. He had a wife and one daughter and they all lived together in a tiny little cottage. Although the poor farmer spent all his time in his field, digging and planting crops, he never seemed to make enough money or grow enough food for his family.

Early one morning, as the farmer was trudging up the mountainside towards his field,

he suddenly heard a loud rustling in the bushes. Thinking that it could be a rabbit or a bird which he could catch, the farmer crept nearer the bushes. Suddenly, he stopped dead and fell backwards, for there, staring down at him from the top of a rock he saw the largest and most frightening lizard that he had ever seen. The poor farmer was speechless and terrified that the lizard would hurt him, but just as he was about



to turn and run away down the mountainside the lizard said, "Do not be afraid my friend. I will not harm you if you will but grant me one wish."

"Anything you wish," stut-tered the terrified farmer, furiously nodding his head up and down.

"I want you to bring your daughter, Elizabeth, to me," continued the lizard.

Of course, the poor farmer was very reluctant to grant this wish for he loved his daughter very much, but it seemed there was nothing he could do. If he refused, the lizard might harm him and his family, so after thinking it over for a few minutes, he agreed to bring his daughter to meet the giant lizard.

All the way home the farmer tried to think of a way of breaking the news to Elizabeth. How could the poor girl know what the lizard was going to do when they met face to face? Then, of course, there was the possibility that she would refuse to go with him to meet the lizard. It was all very worrying for the farmer.

That evening he told Elizabeth what had happened that day and then told her that the

lizard wished to meet her. Much to his surprise, the girl did not show any fear and was quite happy to go with her father. The next morning they went together up the mountainside, to the rock where the lizard had been sitting. Again the farmer heard the rustling sound and the lizard appeared on the rock.

"I have brought my daughter, Elizabeth, to meet you, as you wished," said the farmer shaking again at the sight of such a powerful-looking creature.

"Thank you," replied the lizard, "now I wonder if you will grant me another wish."

"Certainly," replied the farmer wondering what the lizard could possibly want now.

"I want you to return home and leave your daughter in my care for one whole day. I promise you that no harm will come to her and she will return to you this evening."

The farmer was more than a little worried, but his daughter persuaded him that he could trust the lizard. The farmer left the creature and his daughter together and returned home. Later that evening Elizabeth returned home, just as the lizard



had promised and in her arms she carried many presents and gifts. When her father asked who had given her such beautiful presents she replied, "The lizard gave me these presents and in future anything that I wish for will be given to me."

Each day, Elizabeth went to see the giant lizard and talk with him, and each evening she returned home, laden with presents. The farmer also noticed that his daughter was getting more and more beautiful each day and one evening, when she came home carrying many gifts, as usual, he realized that she was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. That same evening she announced to her mother and father that she was going to live in a large castle which the lizard had given to her. Her parents were worried, for they did not want their daughter to leave home, but next morning she said goodbye to her parents and went to live a life of luxury and comfort in a large castle.

One day, she was sitting by the window when a handsome prince rode by on his horse and when he saw how beautiful Elizabeth was, he immediately fell in love with her. He sent

a message to Elizabeth asking her to meet him and she allowed the handsome prince to visit her. After he had been to the castle several times he asked her to marry him, but she explained that he would have to ask the lizard for permission to marry her.

The prince wasted no time and straight away he went to the lizard and asked for the





girl's hand in marriage, and because the lizard was so fond of the girl and he was sure the prince would make her a good husband, he gave them his blessing and said they could be married.

When Elizabeth heard she was to marry the prince, she did not even think of thanking the lizard who had been so kind to her, for now that she had all the clothes and jewels she wanted she did not really want to be bothered with the ugly creature any more.

Elizabeth did not realise that the lizard was really a fairy in disguise and when the fairy found out that the ungrateful girl would not be coming to visit him any more, he decided to punish her.

A week before her wedding, the lizard cast a spell that turned Elizabeth's beautiful face into the head of a goat and when the prince saw what she looked like he did not want to marry her. He knew how ungrateful she had been, after all the kind things the lizard had done for her and he, too, decided to punish her. He forbade her to leave the castle until she had finished weaving thirty yards of cloth. If, at

the end of the week, she had not finished, he would set her another task to cure her of her laziness.

The poor girl did not know what to do and in desperation she went to the lizard to beg forgiveness and ask him to remove the spell. The lizard was moved to tears by the girl's sad story and he forgave her and promised that he would remove the spell.

Alas, Elizabeth did not stop to thank the kind lizard and again she returned to her castle to live a life of luxury. She forgot all about the weaving she had to do for the prince and when he came, at the end of the week, to see if it was finished, he found that she had hardly started it.

The prince was so angry that he ordered Elizabeth to wash and comb the coat of one of his fierce hunting dogs as a punishment for her laziness. It needed two strong men to hold the dog and Elizabeth shook from head to toe at the thought of trying to wash such a big, fierce animal. Also, she still had a goat's head, for the lizard could see that she was not really sorry for her selfish ways at all.



Once again she went to the lizard, to ask for his help, but on her way she met a dwarf. He was holding a mirror in his hand and when Elizabeth went up to him and asked him what he was doing he replied, "Look into this mirror and look at the reflection. See how ugly and mean you look and all this is caused by you having been very unkind and ungrateful. You have not invited your poor mother and father to come and live in the great castle with you. They still live in their tiny cottage with hardly anything to eat. You have been lazy and have not practised at being a good housewife for when you get married. You cannot cook and spin and sew, as a good girl should. Lastly, you do not even care about the good lizard, who made possible all these riches and now he has made you ugly because of all these bad and mean deeds. Is it not time that you mended your ways?"

Elizabeth was suddenly very ashamed of the way she had behaved and she ran to the fairy lizard to beg his forgiveness. She promised that from now on she would work hard and be kind and grateful to



**As a punishment for her laziness the prince ordered Elizabeth to wash and comb the coat of a fierce dog.**





everyone. The lizard could see that she really meant what she was saying this time, so he removed the spell and Elizabeth changed back into a beautiful girl again. She thanked him and told him how grateful she was and she also promised to come and visit him as often as she could. Then with her beauty restored to her, she ran back to the castle to show the handsome prince that the spell had been taken away and she had mended her ways.

The young prince was overjoyed and they soon married. Elizabeth had now learnt how ingratitude and unkindness does nothing but harm and from then on she was always kind to other people.

---

## WHO INVENTED THE GRAMOPHONE?

The first gramophone was invented by Thomas Edison in 1877. It was known as a phonograph and the recording was done on a cylinder—a kind of rolled up record. An advanced type of gramophone came out in 1887. The inventor of this was named Berliner; it resembled the instrument shown in our illustration. Now the record was a flat disc and sound came from the horn.







## MAGIC EAR

Long ago there lived in Japan a comely youth. One day as he walking on the sea shore, he saw a fish out of water flipping about frantically on the beach. Moved by pity at its plight, he picked it up and returned it to the sea. Then he began to walk away.

Just then he heard some one hailing him. He turned round and saw a beautiful girl standing in the foam and beckoning to him. As he stood there undecided, she called out again, "Don't go. Stop." He stood still. Then the lovely lass said, "Know that I am the daughter of the Sea King. Today you saved my life. Therefore, I wish to take you to my kingdom under the sea."

The surprised youth agreed and soon after found himself traversing the deep sea paths. The princess changed into a large fish and carried him on her back.

As the fish moved through the waters, it said to him, "Dear friend, the sea king will want to reward you. Ask for the magic ear and he will give it to you. If you keep it close to your ear, you will be able to understand the language of all the animals in the world."

Then the two of them reached the undersea palace of the Fishes, and the sea king was delighted to hear from his daughter how a mortal had saved her precious life. So turning to the youth, he said, "Friend, I am in your





debt. Ask what you want. It shall be given to you". The youth promptly replied, "Sire, give me the magic ear."

The surprised sea king said, "Strange that you should ask for that. This is the only one of its kind in the world. However, I never go back on my word. So take it and be happy."

Then the mermaid princess brought him up to the surface and leaving him on the shore went back to the sea.

Left alone, the youth wandered on until he reached a tree on which two sparrows chattered. He decided to test the magic ear.

So holding it close to his ears, he began to listen to their conversation.

Said one sparrow to the other, "These mortals pride themselves on their intelligence. Yet they be fools. Look at that fellow crossing the stream. Little does he know that the stone he is stepping on is really a bar of gold."

Quick as thought the youth went forward and picked up the shining bar of gold. Then he went his way. As he walked beneath another tree, he heard two crows croaking raucously. He stopped to hear their conversation.

Said one crow to the other, "These mortals be fine fools. The local landlord's daughter is down with a strange illness. No one is able to cure her. Yet the truth is that 'a tiny snake was caught up in the straw thatch covering the roof. If someone can release it from its agony, the girl will get well."

The youth heard this and straightaway informed the landlord that he could cure his daughter of her strange malady. Now all those doctors who had tried and failed laughed at this simpleton, who did not in the least look like a physician. The





landlord said, "Young man, cure my daughter and I shall give you what you ask."

The youth replied, "Sir, she has been stricken by an evil spell. You have unknowingly imprisoned a tiny snake in your thatched roof. The poor thing is starving to death. Release it and your daughter will get well".

The landlord ordered his men to open the roof. There they saw a tiny snake curled up in a ball. He had it brought out and gave

it some milk to drink. The snake gratefully sipped the milk and at last slithered away.

As the snake started slithering on the hard floor, the blood began to return to the pale cheeks of the dying girl. When the snake disappeared, she got up hale and healthy.

The landlord was so happy at the miraculous recovery of his daughter that he married her off to the young man who lived happily ever afterwards.

[illegible]

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When King Richard came to England from the Crusades, Robert the Wolf, the king's enemy, had no time to attack Robin Hood in Sherwood Forest. Nevertheless, Robin kept a sharp lookout for trouble!

One day, Robin was perched up in a tree watching one of the paths through the forest when he saw a man, wrapped in a black cloak, coming towards him. It was impossible to see who the man was, so Robin decided to find out.



Swiftly, he fitted an arrow to his bow. The string twanged and the arrow sped true to its mark and pierced the ground a few paces in front of the stranger. The man jumped back in alarm, gaping in amazement at the arrow.



Robin Hood was already scrambling down out of the tree. He shouted to the mysterious stranger: "Stand just where you are, or my next arrow might hit you" The man obeyed Robin, standing still, waiting for what might happen next.



The stranger's face beneath the enveloping hood was very handsome, strong and noble. In fact, it was the face of the King of England, Richard Lion Heart, but Robin did not recognise him, not even when he was quite close.

The cunning Prince John had told Richard that Robin Hood and his men were rebels, but the king doubted it. He had come to Sherwood in disguise to find out for himself the truth about the outlaws and he watched Robin carefully.







Robin came and stood right in front of King Richard and asked him: "What do you want here fellow?" King Richard thought he was talking to one of the famous outlaws and said, "I am looking for the outlaw called Robin Hood."

Robin said, "I will take you to the hiding place of Robin Hood, Follow me." When they reached the camp, Robin called to his men, "See, here is a fellow who wants to meet that rascal and robber, Robin Hood." Little John, Friar Tuck and all the outlaws laughed out loud.





Richard Lion Heart wanted to show these outlaws that he was also merry and bold. He pointed to Little John. "You laugh loudly," he said, "but I will make you sing small." "How will you do that," asked Little John, "By wrestling with you" declared Richard. "If you are not afraid".



The outlaws soon made a ring and Little John felt quite sure he could win easily, but he soon found out his mistake. With a quick movement King Richard lifted Little John off his feet and threw him to the ground. "Bravo!" exclaimed Robin. "It is amazing," gasped Friar Tuck.







Little John was amazed himself that he had been so easily beaten, and he realised that this stranger was no ordinary man. But it had been a fair beating, and Little John getting to his feet, said with a broad grin, "Today I have been given a lesson."

Robin faced the stranger with a smile and said to him: "If you are as good with your staff as you are at wrestling will you try a bout with me?" "Aye, that I will, Robin," replied the stranger. "Shall we commence now?"



Robin grasped his staff and boldly faced the unknown man. The watching outlaws saw at once that Robin faced a man who knew well how to handle a staff. The contest was certainly not going to be very easy for Robin Hood.



It was a tough fight between the two men. They wielded their staves with skill and vigour and neither of them would give way so much as a foot. Robin was reckoned to be a champion with his staff but it was of no use.



Suddenly, Robin's staff was knocked out of his hands and he received such a whack on this head that he sat down on the ground, dazed and bewildered! Shaking his head, Robin said, "Friend, you are a man after my own heart. It is an honour to fight with you. But tell me—Who are you?"



**ANOTHER EXCITING EPISODE IN NEXT ISSUE**



# PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST

Here is your opportunity to win a cash prize!  
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- ★ These two photographs are somewhat related. Can you think of suitable captions? Could be single words, or several words, but the two captions must be related to each other.
- ★ Prize of Rs. 20 will be awarded for the best double caption. Remember, entries must be received by the 30th June,
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# Androcles

## and the Lion

A long, long time ago, when the Roman empire stretched half-way across the world, there lived a young man who was called Androcles. He had been captured by the Romans after a fierce battle and taken to Rome to be sold as a slave.

The man who bought Androcles in the slave market was hard and cruel and he treated Androcles very badly, beating him every time he made the slightest mistake. The young man was very unhappy and longed for his freedom. He did not like being made to serve the rich merchants and shop owners who came to his master's home. They were greedy, ill-mannered and treated him badly.

One day, Androcles made up his mind to escape. That night he packed his few belongings together and when everybody was asleep, he escaped over the

wall of his master's house. He ran and ran through the silent streets of Rome, determined to





put as many miles as he could between his master and himself before daylight came.

For several days he travelled, stopping only to hide at the side of the road, when fellow travellers came into sight. By now he was tired and hungry and as night fell he looked for shelter. There were mountains all around him and he looked among the rocks to find a cave, in which to spend the night. He quickly found one and went inside, fell down on the floor and went to sleep.

The next morning he awoke, fully refreshed after his tiring journey, but as he opened his eyes he saw a terrifying sight. Standing not more than a few feet away, in the entrance to the cave, was an enormous mountain lion. Androcles realised that he had stumbled into the lion's den and now the fierce animal was barring his way out.

As the young man and the lion stood eyeing one another Androcles noticed that instead of getting ready to spring and attack him, the lion was holding a paw in the air. Every few seconds it would lick the paw and whimper and the young man noticed that it was

red and swollen. Androcles crept closer and carefully took the lion's paw in his hand. He saw a sharp thorn embedded in the side and with one quick movement he pulled it out. As he wrapped the paw in a piece of cloth the lion gave a low growl and licked Androcles's face to show how grateful it was.

For two days the lion lay on its side, recovering and each day the young man attended to the wound and kept it clean. The swelling went down and soon after, the animal could walk properly.

Although the lion could not speak, it was obvious that it was very grateful for what Androcles had done. It had watched him try to catch rabbits and birds to eat, but they always escaped and the young man had to live on berries, so that morning the lion disappeared and did not return till evening, bringing with it a rabbit and a bird which it had caught. Then lion dropped them at Androcles's feet and then led him to a spring of fresh water that gushed out of the mountainside. Androcles had found it difficult enough to find food, but now the friendly



lion was bringing him all the food he needed. Day after day the lion went out hunting, always returning in the evening with food of one sort or another and each night Androcles cooked the food over a fire and he and the lion shared the meal.

Androcles realised that if he went back to the city now, he was bound to be recognised and recaptured and punished for running away, so he decided to stay in the cave with his new friend, the lion.

For three years the lion and the young man lived together in the mountains, hunting and eating together while at night the young man curled up beside the lion, whose shaggy fur kept him warm.

One day, Androcles decided it was time he returned to the city. It had been a long time since he had seen a fellow man and he was sure that nobody would remember his face after all this time. He said good-bye to his faithful friend and set off on the road that led back to Rome.

Several days later he entered the city, but on his very first day back, disaster struck. He was strolling through a street

market, looking at some new clothes and wondering how he could get enough money to buy them, when somebody tapped him on the shoulder. Androcles turned round and came face to face with his old master. The cruel and wicked man immediately called the Roman





soldiers and Androcles was thrown into jail.

It was the law in Rome that if a runaway slave was recaptured he must be sent to fight in the arena. This was where men, armed with short swords, fought one another, or fierce animals for the entertainment of the crowd, who sat round the arena and watched, or placed bets on who was going to win the contest. Men called gladiators were specially trained to fight in the arenas and their masters would make wagers with other men on who was going to win.

Sentence was passed on Androcles and he was ordered to fight to the death a fierce lion, on the next Roman public holiday, when the arena would be full of people.

The appointed day arrived and Androcles was led into the arena by his guards. All around him the people of Rome were jeering and whistling and placing bets on the contest, but nobody but the most foolish thought the young man would win.

As Androcles entered the arena he saw the lion's cage, where the animal had been kept for several days without

food so that it had a good appetite and would be very fierce. Androcles wondered how he could kill such a fierce animal with only a short sword, but his thoughts were cut short by a sudden fanfare of trumpets. Androcles was left alone in the arena and the crowd became silent. As he looked up into one of the balconies he saw the emperor of Rome give the signal for the contest to start.

The door of the cage was flung open and with a growl and a bound, the lion rushed into the arena. Androcles prepared for the animal to attack and as the lion walked round him, growling, Androcles moved closer.

Closer and closer the young man crept, until suddenly to everybody's surprise he walked up to the animal and gave it a pat on the head. The lion licked his hand and face and Androcles put his arm round its neck. The crowd was in an uproar. Who was this man who seemed to have a magic power over wild animals? The emperor summoned his guards told them to bring the young man to him.

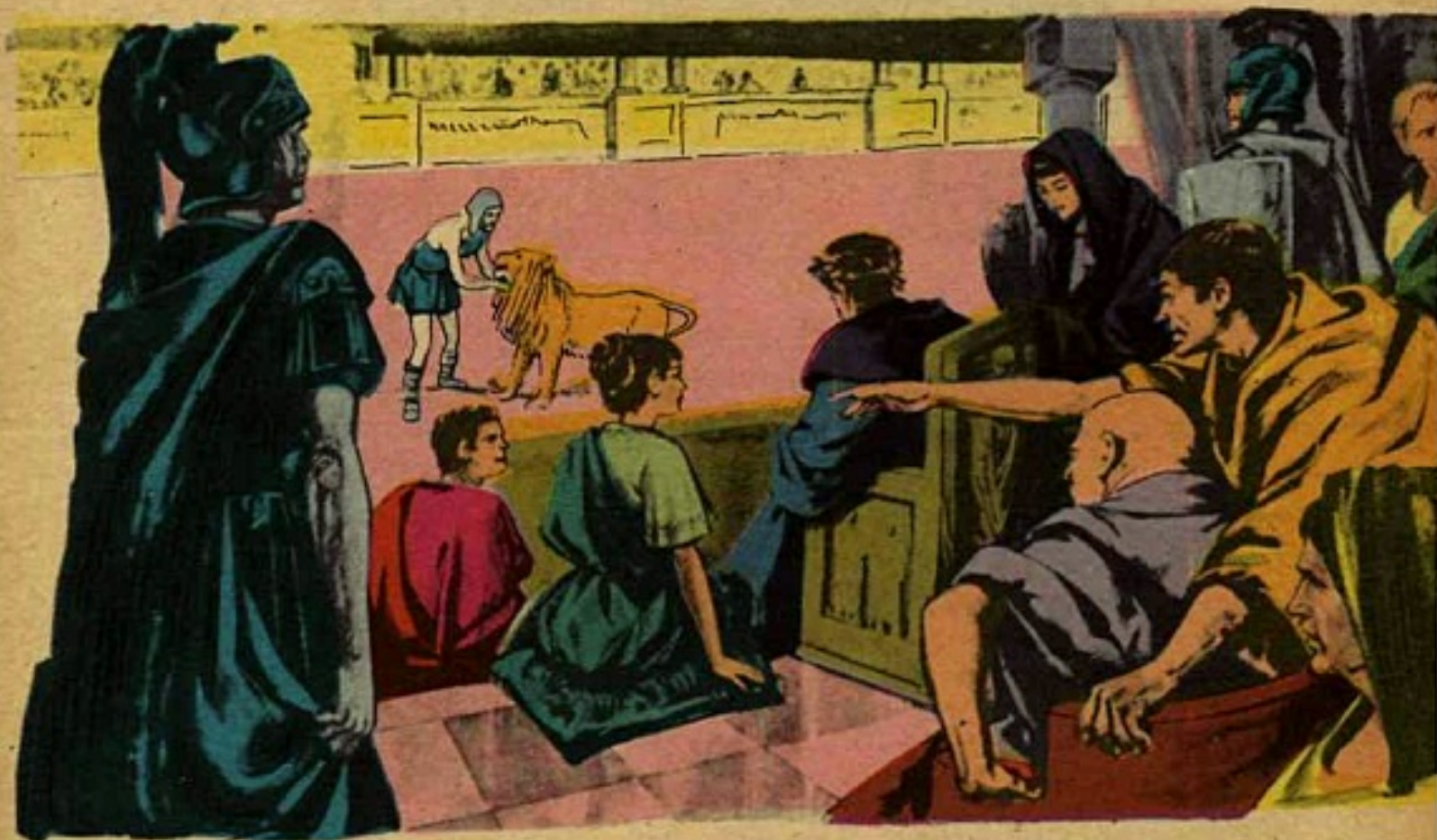
A few minutes later he came before the powerful ruler and



as Androcles knelt before him, the emperor asked for an explanation. Androcles told him how he had lived with a friendly lion in the mountains for three years after having removed a thorn from its paw. It was the same lion which he had faced in the arena and the animal had remembered him. That was why the hungry lion had not attacked him.

The emperor was delighted with the story and he ordered his guards to set Androcles and

the lion free at once. Androcles was to be a slave no longer, for he was made a Roman citizen. The young man's fame spread and soon people were offering him money to tell his story. He soon had enough money to buy a house and from then on Androcles lived in the city of Rome, a free man and the citizens became used to the sight of the young man strolling along the streets, with a fully grown lion at his heels.







## THREE SCROLLS

Long ago there lived a youth called Chandra. Though he was very poor he was eager to learn. But there was no scope for higher studies in his village. So he decided to travel to the holy city of Benares where he would meet his uncle and seek his assistance in acquiring higher knowledge.

One winter morning he left his village and walked all day and all night. At last he came

to an inn on the outskirts of the city. As he was very tired he decided to rest there for the night. It was very cold, and so he lit a fire and warmed himself. Just then he noticed another traveller shivering in the cold. Naturally, kind-hearted Chandra called the other man over and offered him the warmth of his fire.

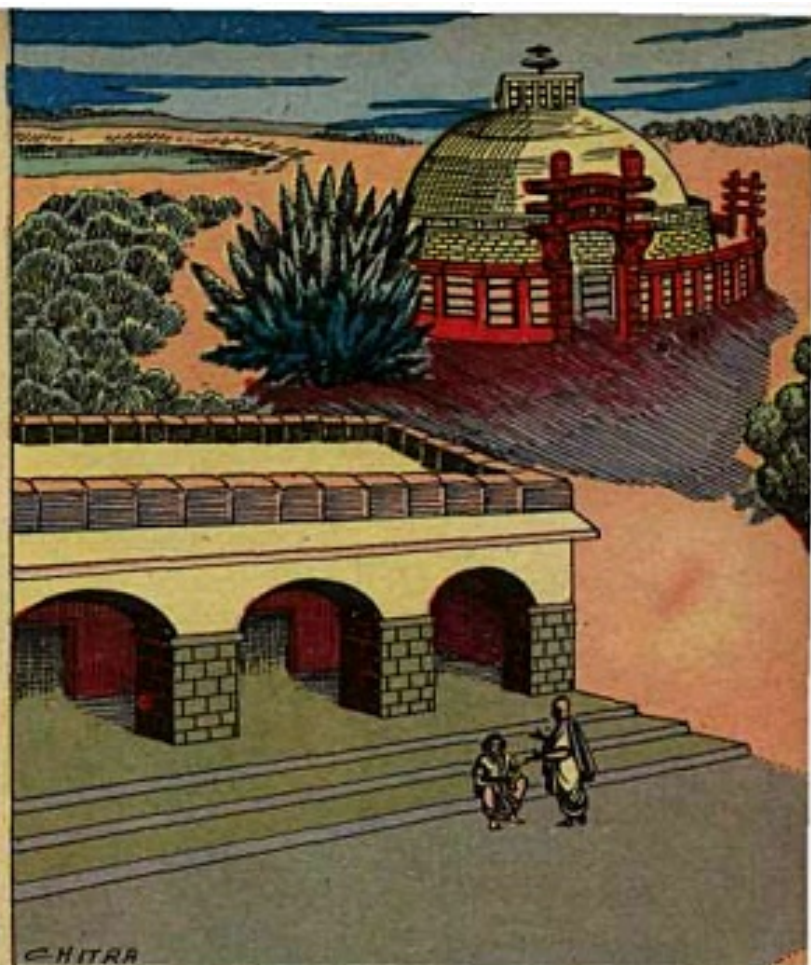
The innkeeper brought his dinner and not wanting to eat



alone, Chandra invited the other man to share his food. The poor traveller who was truly famished gratefully accepted Chandra's invitation and ate his fill.

Next morning, Chandra got ready to depart. Just then his friend of the previous evening came up to him and said, "Sir, I can't tell you how grateful I am for your kindness in letting me share your fire and food. How can I ever repay you? Well, here are three scrolls. I have numbered them in numerical order 1, 2 and 3. Open and read each only when you are in great difficulties. Follow the instructions faithfully and you'll come into a great fortune." Then he gave Chandra the three scrolls.

Chandra secreted them in his bag and resumed his journey to Benares. Having arrived there he went in search of his uncle, but as no one seemed to have heard of the latter, he did not have any luck in finding the house. Then he hired a room with his meagre funds and began to study for the scholarship examinations. But as ill luck would have it he failed in all of them. He was now at the end of his resources. He began



to think about his desperate situation when suddenly he remembered the three scrolls and the injunction that he was to open each one only in times of acute distress. Quickly taking out the one marked 1 he began to read. "Go to the Sarnath choultry and sit before the doors," was the first injunction. Hastily gathering his belongings he went there and waited in front of the doors. The choultry-keeper saw him sitting forlornly and taking pity on him said, "Friend, come inside. It's rather cold out there."

So Chandra went in and soon made himself warm before the



fireplace. He and the choultry-keeper fell to talking and soon it came out that Chandra's uncle was a well known judge of the city courts, a wise and learned man called Somāsundar. Then Chandra said, "I came to this city in search of my uncle. But I have not been able to meet him."

The surprised choultry-keeper asked many questions about Chandra's parentage. Satisfied at last that the youth was indeed the nephew of that great man, he said, "Sir, your uncle has donated generously for the upkeep of this choultry. Some time ago, he left on a pilgrimage after

instructing me to hand over a bag containing two thousand gold coins to the one who should prove to be his nephew Chandra. I am satisfied to know that you are he. So take this money. It will be of some help to you." Then he handed over a bag full of jangling gold coins.

Chandra was not a little astonished at the sudden turn in his fortunes. The advice in the first scroll had paid off handsomely. Though he had no longer to worry about funds to sustain him during his stay at Benares, he hadn't yet discovered how to pass his exami-





nations. So he unrolled the second scroll to find out what advice it contained.

"Go to Nandkishore's grocery at the West Cross Street," was the second advice offered to him.

So Chandra went to that shop and overheard the conversation of two scholars who were waiting to be served.

Said one, "I shall ask these questions at the ensuing scholarship examination. No one will be able to answer them."

The other scholar after listening to the questions opined that even the most brilliant student would find it difficult to answer them.

Chandra was listening atten-

tively to all that passed between the two scholars. He memorized the questions, returned home and wrote out the answers. When examination time came round, he did so well that it was not surprising to find his name topping the list of successful candidates.

Right after the results were announced Chandra was offered the post of a Judge in the High Court of Benares. Soon as a Judge he made a name for himself in that city.

For many years he lived in that city and earned fame and wealth, but as he did not marry he had no family.

At last he fell ill and knew that his end was near. He had only one worry. What to do with all the wealth he had accumulated?

Then he remembered the third scroll. Hastily he opened it and read the following words, "Write your will and make your peace with the Maker."

So Chandra wrote out his will and distributed his property amongst the poor of the city. Happy that he had lived a full life and had done his duty by his fellow men, he breathed his last and went to join his Maker.





# The Little Singing Frog

Once upon a time, many, many years ago, there lived a poor peasant farmer and his wife. Although they were poor they were both very happy, but there was one thing that the farmer's wife wished for, more than anything in the world and this was a child of their own.

"How nice it would be," said the farmer's wife to her husband one day, "if we had a young son or a daughter whom we could bring up and play with. It would make my happiness complete."

The poor farmer sighed. He, too, often wished that they had a young son or daughter of their own.

"Any kind of child would do," continued his wife. "I'd be thankful for a son or a daughter, even if he or she looked like a frog."

That night the farmer and his wife knelt by their bedside and

prayed that they would be sent a child to look after.

When the sun rose, early next morning, the woman went downstairs into the kitchen to prepare her husband's breakfast.

The farmer stayed in bed for a few more minutes, but he was suddenly shaken out of his daydreams by his wife's excited shouts.

"Come quickly, come quickly," she shouted. "Look what I've found."

The farmer rushed downstairs as fast as his legs would carry him and as he stumbled into the kitchen, he saw an amazing sight. There, on the floor, was a wooden cradle with a little girl inside. As he came closer he saw that the little girl had the face of a frog, but this did not worry him in the least.

"At last we have a child of our own," said his wife, with





tears of happiness streaming down her face. The farmer, too, was very happy and as he started off to work he felt as though he were a new man. At last all their prayers and wishes had been granted.

The years passed by and the little girl, with the face of a frog, grew older, but her childhood was not such a happy one as it should have been. The farmer's neighbours and their children, were cruel and thoughtless and they called the little girl names because of her face. The farmer and his wife did not know what to do and so, every time there were people about, they hid their little girl inside the house, so she grew up without ever having any playmates.

Of course, as she grew older so her parents became older,

until finally her mother could no longer take her husband's lunch to him as he worked in the fields. Instead, the little frog girl carried it to him.

She had great fun skipping in and out of the grape vines which her father grew and one



of her favourite games was to sit in a tree and sing to her father as he worked below her. Surprisingly, the little girl had a beautiful voice and before long, her father called her "the singing frog" as a pet name.

One day, as the girl was singing to her father, a hand-

some young man rode by on a horse. Little did the girl and her father realise that the young man was the son of the Czar, the ruler of all Yugoslavia. Just as he was passing the tree in which the girl was sitting, he stopped. He listened to the beautiful voice for a while and then called to the farmer and said, "Tell me, who is singing with such a beautiful voice? Surely it cannot be you?" The farmer realised the young man could not have seen his daughter seated high up in the tree.

"I did not hear anything," he replied, for he did not want the prince to meet his daughter. He would only start laughing, as the neighbours had done.

The young man rode away very puzzled, but the next day he returned to the field and again he heard the lovely voice singing. Again he called to the farmer and asked who was singing and again the farmer denied that he had heard anything.

"I am sure that the girl who is singing in such a beautiful way must also be very beautiful," he said. "It is the voice of a lovely girl. If only I could find her I would marry her at once and take her home to my father, the Czar."





"Do not be so rash in what you say," said the farmer, thinking of his daughter with her frog face, for although he loved her dearly he did not dream that anybody would want to marry her.

"I mean it," cried the prince. "I would marry her as quickly as possible."

"Are you quite sure?" said the farmer.

"Yes," replied the prince, "anybody with a voice like that must surely be beautiful."

"Very well then, you shall see the girl who sings so beautifully," and so saying the farmer called to his daughter to come down from the tree.

Much to the farmer's surprise, the prince said he still loved her and her beautiful voice.

"Tomorrow," said the young man, "my brothers and I must present our brides to my father. He has promised to give his kingdom to the prince whose bride is holding the loveliest flower." Then, turning to the girl he went down on one knee and said, "Dear little singing frog, will you be my bride and come to the palace with me tomorrow?"

"Yes, I will," she replied,



**Th sentries barred her way.**

'But I cannot possibly come to the palace on foot, along the dusty roads. Please send me a snow white cock so that I can ride to the palace.'

The prince agreed to do this and before night had fallen a snow white cock had been taken to the farmer's cottage.

The girl rose early next morn-



ing and, kneeling at the foot of her bed, she prayed to the sun, "O golden sun, give me some lovely clothes, woven from your golden rays, for I cannot shame the prince by wearing these poor peasant's dresses." As she spoke, the sun's rays crossed and weaved as they came through her open window and within a few minutes a lovely golden gown lay on the floor of her bedroom. Wondering what sort of flower she could possibly take to the palace, the girl went out into the fields and picked an ear of wheat.

It was a hot and dusty journey to the palace, but the snow white cock took the girl safely to the gates. There her way was barred by two sentries.

"This is no place for frogs," said one of the sentries.

"Go back to your muddy pond," said the other.

However, the little frog girl did not take any notice. She insisted on being let through the gates. At last, the two sentries let her through and then followed her inside and there, an amazing sight met their eyes. As the girl dropped the golden dress over her head she became very beautiful and the white cock changed to a

snow white horse. The poor sentries could hardly believe their eyes.

As she entered the Czar's throne room, she saw the three brothers and the other two brides waiting for her.

Suddenly there was a fanfare of trumpets and the Czar entered.

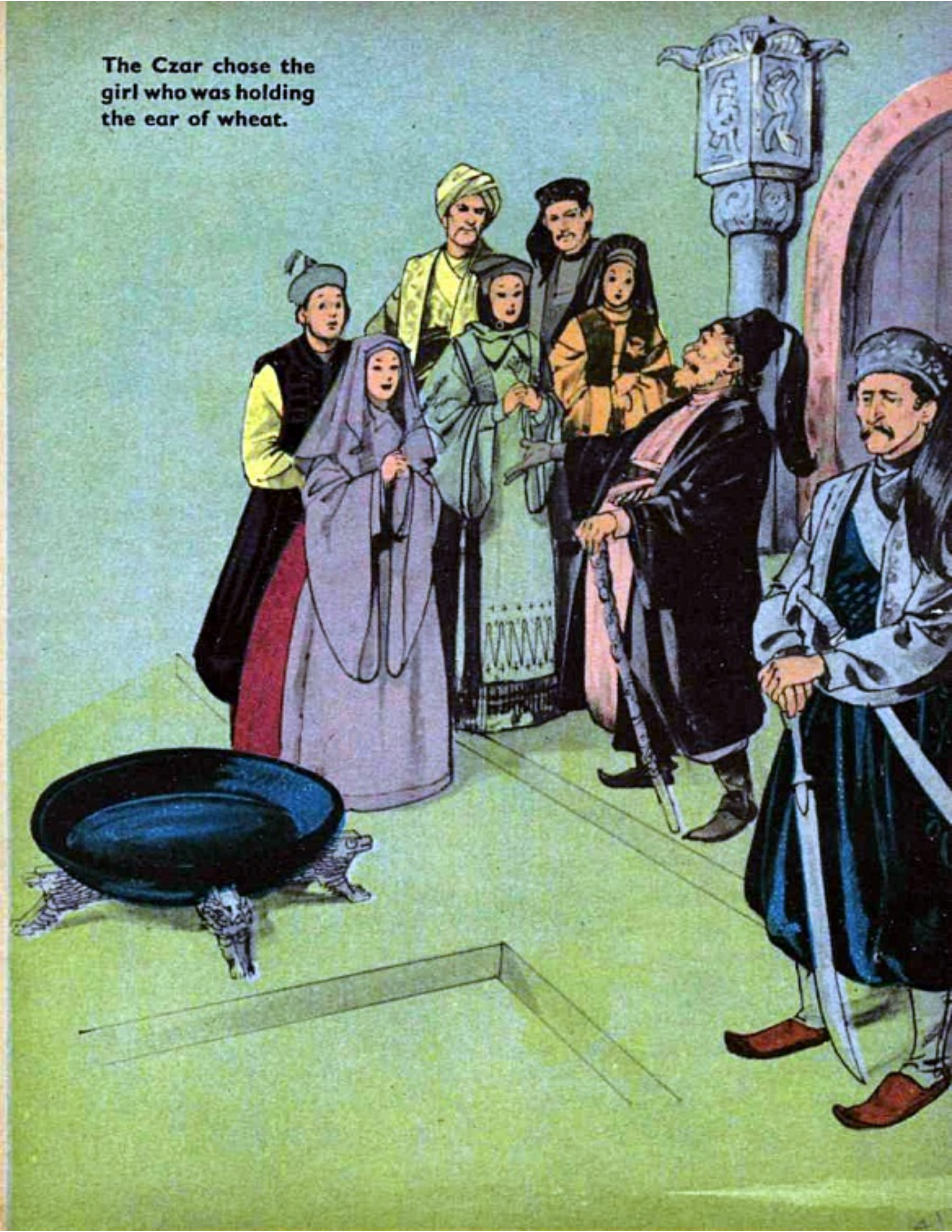
He went up to the youngest son and his bride. She carried a rose and after looking at the girl the Czar sniffed the flower. Still without speaking he stood in front of the second bride and sniffed the flower she was holding. It was a carnation. Then, finally, he came to the frog girl, who had now changed into a beautiful girl.

He looked at the ear of wheat she was holding and then spoke. "My sons, I have seen your brides and the flowers they have brought to me. My choice is the girl who holds the ear of wheat. Not only is she beautiful, but she also knows what is useful and valuable."

The little frog girl, who had come from a poor peasant home, married the youngest prince and became the Czarina of Yugoslavia and she and her husband lived for many, many more happy years.



The Czar chose the girl who was holding the ear of wheat.







## MAMUNDI'S SON

In the land of Mahalaya there lived a magician called Mamundi. He knew many spells and earned a lot of money through his abracadabra. But he was a good man and helped the poor and the needy. He had a son called Suppiah who was also well versed in the magic arts.

Suppiah thought that his father was not utilising his talents properly. He thought he could do better on his own. So he left for the capital to see the King and display his magic arts before him. When the King heard who he was and why he had come, he became furious. Now the reason was that some astrologer had prophesied the death of the young prince at the

hands of a magician when the former would be two years old. The King was reminded of this prophecy because on that day the young prince had attained the age of two.

The nervous King plotted with his minister to end Suppiah's life. Accordingly the young man was invited to stay in the royal guest house where at night he was served dinner liberally sprinkled with a kind of poison. Suppiah ate and collapsed. That night his body was secretly buried in a plot of land adjacent to the palace.

When his son did not return from the capital, Mamundi set out to find him. He reached the capital and soon learnt the



ghastly truth. His anger knew no bounds. He decided to wreak a terrible vengeance on the King. One evening he went to the royal gardens where the young prince was wont to play. Through his magic arts, he hypnotised the maids and the guards and abducted the young prince. He brought the child back to his house and removing all its lovely gold ornaments and silken dress, gave it very ordinary clothes to wear. The royal child began to grow in his house.

In the meanwhile, the King became inconsolable at the loss of his child. His ministers comforted him by reminding him of the prophecy which had said that the prince would only be abducted but not lose his life. He would surely return someday.

When Suppiah went to his death, he was only sixteen years old. So when the prince reached the age of sixteen, Mamundi called him aside and gave him a box. Then he said, "Son, take this box and give it to the king of this land. Tell him that this is a gift from me to the king for the befitting manner in which he honoured and rewarded your elder brother."



Then the prince asked, "An elder brother? Why, you never told me!"

"Never mind," said Mamundi. "Do as I tell you and the king will reward you. Go now."

As the prince thought Mamundi was his father, he did not dare disobey him. So he went to the king and gave him the box. When the King opened it, he found in it all the baby clothes and ornaments his lost son had worn. Thinking that this young man was responsible for the abduction of the prince, he ordered his execution forthwith.

But his minister was a clever man who detected in the young



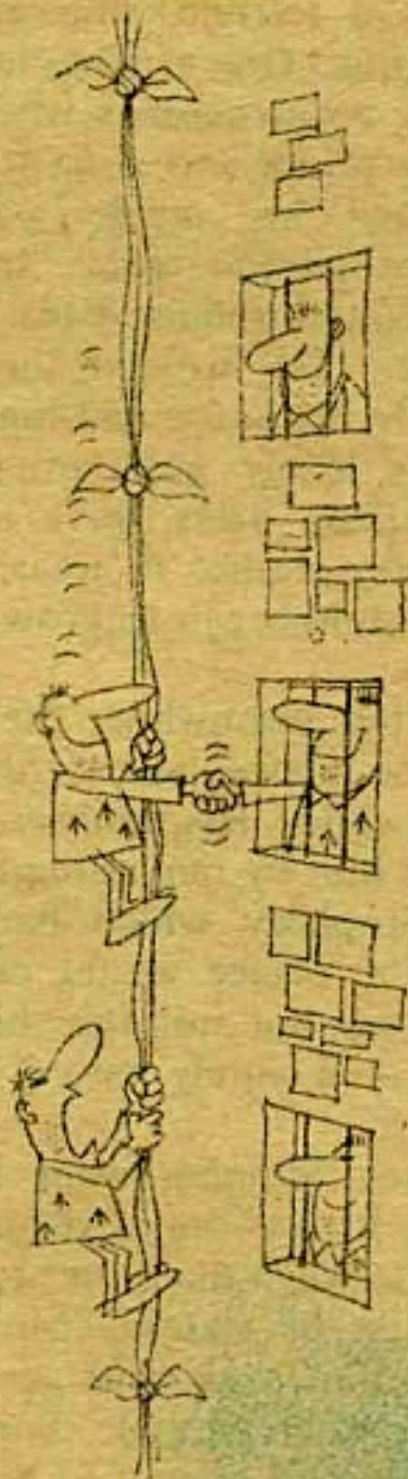
man's face signs of royalty. So he requested the King to postpone the execution and himself searched the box. In one corner he discovered a letter.

He read, "Oh, foolish King! in your haste, you will have executed this young man on the suspicion that he abducted the royal prince. Then you will have killed your own son, for this is he. I have taken revenge for the murder of my son at your hands."

Then the minister said to the King, "Sir, if the young prince had lived he would indeed be this young man's age. Therefore, without a shadow of doubt, this lad is your very own prince."

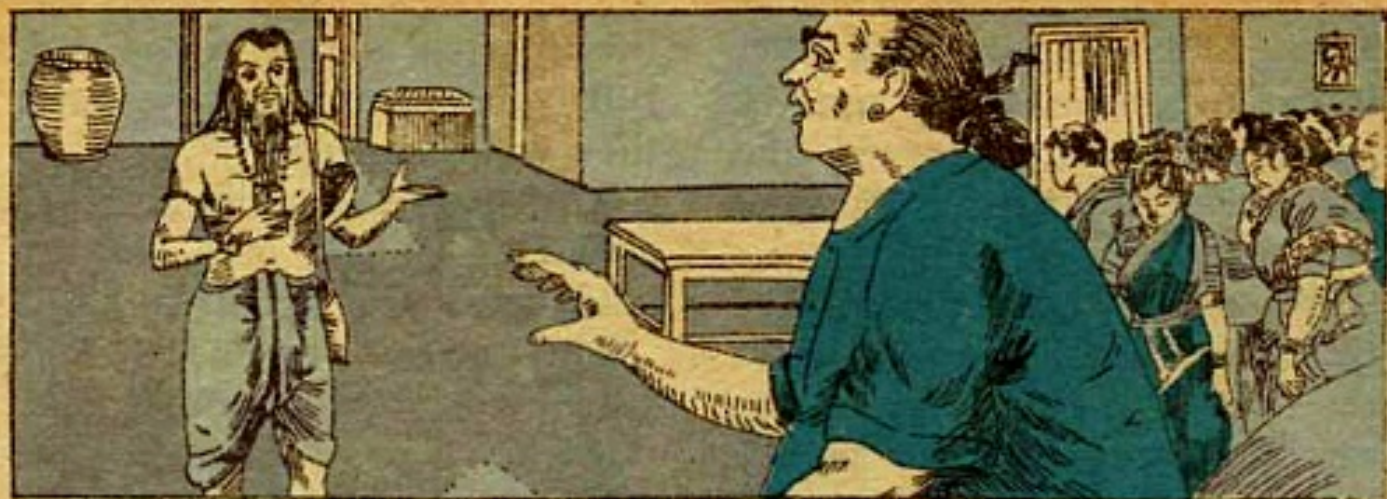
Then the King invited Mamundi to the Court and said, "Mamundi, I have done you great wrong through my ignorance and superstition. Forgive me! For having reared my son all these years, you have my heartfelt gratitude."

Then the King appointed Mamundi to a good post in the Court and showered gifts on him. As the prince could not bear to part from Mamundi, the latter had to spend the rest of his life at the palace, his vengeful spirit now a thing of the past.



'If you're going to say goodbye to all your friends on the way, we'll never get out!'





## The Miser Who Changed

Long ago there lived in the town of Kancheepuram, a millionaire who was not known for his generosity. In fact, he was a miser and a selfish man who would not lift his little finger to help people. But he had a host of relatives who lived off him.

One day, a hermit came to his house and asked for alms. The millionaire roughly ordered him out and said, "You hypocrite, be gone! I shan't give you anything."

But the hermit was made of sterner stuff and he camped right at the doorstep and refused to budge until he was given alms. In this manner three days passed with the hermit blocking the front door. The millionaire

would not give in, and began to use the back door. On the fourth day the hermit lifted the lonely seige and walked away. The millionaire was overjoyed at having won a victory over the mendicant.

A few days later, the same hermit came back. Upon seeing him, the millionaire became vexed and cried out, "What, has the devil come back again?"

Then he sent his servant to find out what the hermit wanted. To the query of the servant, the hermit said he desired to speak to the master.

"Ask him to come back after six months," said the millionaire when he heard this. Six months later, the hermit was back and again the millionaire



asked him to come back after three months. Three months later, the hermit returned and was asked to come back after two months

When for the fourth time, the hermit presented himself before the millionaire the latter was not a little astonished at the tenacity of the man. So he said, "Well, Holy man, You've been coming here for the past year. What do you want of me?"

The hermit replied, "Sir, I came to warn you. You put a lot of trust in your sons and relatives. In times of need, they won't come to your aid. As long as your money lasts,

they'll fetch and carry for you, But once your money goes, they will also depart."

The surprised millionaire exclaimed, "What, man, has it taken you a year to tell me this?"

The hermit replied, "You would not allow me to speak. But I warn you again. Beware of your kith and kin. If you wish to know the truth, I shall devise a test by which you can judge for yourself the value of all the parasites you encourage."

The millionaire was plunged into thought by these words.

One night, the millionaire collapsed in pain. Doctors were sent for, but his condition seemed to worsen. At last he told his wife, "It doesn't seem as though I'll live longer. I haven't done a single virtuous deed. If I live for a year more, I shall spend all my money on charities and earn a reward in heaven."

When his relatives heard about his plight, they gathered round him and shed crocodile tears.

Then the hermit came in bearing a cup full of milk. He looked at the assembly of sorrowing relatives and said, "In a few moments, he will breathe his last. Only after he is properly dead can I bring him back to life. But someone of you must







be prepared to drink this cup of poisoned milk and die so that he may live. Through my art I will transfer new life into the old and the millionaire will live. So who is willing to die for this Sinner?"

The hermit ceased speaking and looked expectantly round the crowd. But no one spoke and no one came forward to take up the offer. Neither his wife nor his children made any move to exchange their lives for the dying man.

Suddenly, the millionaire sat up, hale and hearty. He fell at the hermit's feet, wept and said, "Holy Sir, forgive me for what I did to you. You were right.

All my relatives surrounded me only for my wealth. From now on, I shall give my wealth away to deserving charities."

From that day on, he turned, a new leaf, shed his miserliness drove all his unfeeling relatives from his side and lived a simple and pious life.

### RIDDLES

1. What is the largest rope in the world?
2. Why is a field of grass like a person older than yourself?
3. What ship does everyone dislike?

### ANSWERS

1. Eu-rope. 2. Because it is past your age (pasturage). 3. Hardship.





# SUNDARASIMHA

Jaisimha, the ruler of Jagat-jalapuri had two Queens, neither of whom was blessed with a child. The senior Queen wanted the King to adopt her brother's son Madivana as the heir-apparent, while the younger Queen recommended her own brother's son Sundarasimha for the throne.

The poor King found himself on the horns of a dilemma because he could not displease either Queen and yet he had to choose a successor to himself. Then his minister said, "Let us

test the two youngmen. He who succeeds in the test will be deemed worthy to sit on the throne."

The King and the two Queens agreed to abide by the results of the test.

The minister called Madivana and said, "Son, the King may choose you as the heir to the throne. Therefore go and see the world before you become king."

Then he gave the young prince some money, a grand chariot and sent him on his



way. Madivana started on his travels and soon came to the Aravalli hills. As he was passing through a narrow gorge a gang of dacoits fell on him and robbed him of all his wealth. Then they threatened to kill him. The prince greatly alarmed said, "Look here, men! I am the prince who will shortly rule over this land. Let me live and you'll not regret it."

Then the dacoits said, "Aha! so you are a prince. Good! That suits us very well. Now we shan't let you go unless the king ransoms you for twenty thousand gold pieces. Moreover, if he tries to attack us, your life will be forfeit. So write a letter accordingly, and when we get the money, we'll set you free."

Poor Madivana did as he was bid and wrote a letter. Then he was blindfolded and taken into a dark cave.

When the senior Queen received his letter, she wrung her hands in despair and implored the King to rescue him. So the King paid off the ransom money and Madivana was released by the dacoits. When he reached the palace, everyone questioned him about the hide-out of the bandits, but he could not tell them anything as he

had been kept blindfolded and later released at a totally different spot.

Then Sundarasimha said, "I will go and capture those bandits."

He set out in his golden chariot and carried a bag full of gold coins. As he neared the Aravalli hills, the bandits ambushed him and stripped him of all his belongings. When they were about to kill him he addressed the dacoits, "Well, men, why do you trouble yourself so? I came to give you this money. You are fools to be content with only twenty thousand gold pieces asked for the release of Madivana. He is my mortal enemy. The King promised to adopt me, but proved false to his words by adopting Madivana as his heir-apparent.





Therefore, I have decided to throw in my lot with you."

The bandits believed him and took him to their hideout. Now his charioteer who had been a secret witness to all this noted the strength of the bandit band, the location of their hideout and their activities. Then he went back to the palace.

Then Sundarasimha told the robbers, "Madivana has learnt the location of your caves. He will arrive here with his soldiers any moment. So let us take our loot and go elsewhere."

The bandits were thoroughly alarmed and quickly gathered all their ill-gotten gains. But in their hurry they neglected to take their weapons and this proved to be their undoing.

As they staggered along the mountain path under the heavy load of their loot, soldiers of the king who had already been alerted by Sundarasimha's charioteer pounced on them

from ambush. Then Sundarasimha ordered the captured robbers to be taken before the King. Too late, the bandits realised that the young prince had tricked them by pretending to join them.

The King and the court praised the valour and courage of the young prince, Sundarasimha. Then the minister declared, "Madivana fell down on his task. Though he was captured by the bandits, he could gather no information about their number and hideout. But Sundarasimha succeeded admirably where Madivana failed. Therefore, the former is fit to become the heir-apparent of the King."

The King and the Queens accepted this judgement and Sundarasimha was adopted by the royal family. He proved his mettle in later years by governing wisely and well.







# MAHABHARATA

*The story so far ...*

*The term of banishment having expired, Yudhishtira demanded that the kingdom of Indraprastha should be restored to him. The old blind king, Dhritarashtra and his queen and the aged and virtuous councillors advised the restoration, but the jealous Duryodhana hated his cousins with a genuine hatred, and refused to consent. All negotiations seemed futile, and preparations were made on both sides for the most disastrous conflict that had ever been witnessed in India. Now we read that Lord Krishna in his great wisdom, could foresee the futility of war, and*

*decides to make a last effort to sue for peace.*

Duryodhana turned a deaf ear to the entreaties of Dhritarashtra. All the many Kings assembled in the court knew without a shadow of doubt that war was inevitable.

The old King wanted his sons to win in the event of a war, so he called Sanjaya aside and asked, "You know the strength of the Pandavas. Describe to me their strength individually."

Sanjaya told him all about the mighty preparations of the Pandavas but emphasised their genuine desire for peace. Then





thinking that Dhritarashtra might be persuaded to adopt a peaceful stance, he said.

"I will tell you all about their desire for peace. But first, let me call Lord Vyasa and Gandhari. Then you will be able to understand even better."

Vyasa and Gandhari came in response to Sanjaya's invitation.

Sanjaya continued to speak.

"Oh! King! Lord Krishna and Arjuna are both divine reincarnations. Your sons cannot defeat them. This is the great secret that I now reveal to you." Rather surprised

Dhritarashtra queried tremulously, "Oh! Sanjaya! how did you find this out? I did not know of this till now."

Sanjaya replied, "Sire, ignorance blinds you truly. Knowledge has opened my eyes to the truth of the matter."

Lord Vyasa voiced his support of Sanjaya. "Lord Krishna likes you immensely. Sanjaya too knows who Lord Krishna is, well and truly. So it is best if you listen to his words."

These words impressed Dhritarashtra greatly. After all, the Pandavas were his own brother's children. Duryodhana should make peace with them. After what Sanjaya had revealed about the colossal strength and formidable array of the Pandavas, the Kauravas could never hope to win in the coming war.

At about the same time, in Upablavya, Yudhishtira spoke to Lord Krishna.

"Krishna, It is now that we need the help of good friends. We have no one else but you to turn to. We shall fight the Kauravas boldly because we depend upon you." Lord Krishna did not reply but smiled benignly. Yudhishtira continued.



"You heard what Sanjaya had to say. Dhritarashtra wants to make peace with us without giving back our property. We suffered in exile because we listened to his words. He will always side with Duryodhana. We need only five villages. Even that he is not willing to give. A Kshatriya will never beg from anyone. He would rather die than accept charity. Therefore, there is no way but to fight. What do you say?"

Lord Krishna said, "I view everything impartially. I desire good for both sides. I shall go and talk to the Kauravas. If I can bring them around, then peace will be established."

Yudhishtira agreed with this. "That is good. But Duryodhana must see this in the proper light. All his partisans share his views. I am not sure that I like your going to their place."

Lord Krishna said, "Yudhishtira, don't I know Duryodhana? And the others know who I am. They will not dare to harm me. I should not be found wanting in my peaceful efforts. Therefore, I must journey to Hastinapura."

Yudhishtira replied softly, "Oh! Lord, you know better

than I do about this matter. Try and get success for our efforts. I should not presume to tell you what you must convey to the Kauravas."

Lord Krishna said, "Yudhishtira, you are a true and just man. It is virtue for a Kshatriya to fight. He will never beg. The Kauravas are also gathering in full strength. I wonder if they will agree to peace! It doesn't seem that they regret treating you so badly. You too should not sympathise with them. Even the elders, Drona, Dhritarashtra and Bhishma are not raising their voices in protest. Any way,

**Arjuna says he has little faith in Duryodhana.**







let us try for peace. If that fails, then it must be war.”

Having said this, Lord Krishna looked around at the assembly of Pandavas to find out what they thought of his proposals.

“Bhima, what do you say?” he asked. Then Bhima replied, “Krishna, It is good that you go and talk to the Kauravas. Try your best and may victory crown your efforts.”

Lord Krishna chuckled softly and said, “Bhima, you astonish me! Do you want peace, because you are afraid of the Kauravas?”

Bhima replied spiritedly, “Krishna, I want peace because war may destroy our entire race. You know that I never run from a fight.”

Lord Krishna mollified him by saying. “I only wanted to find out what you thought of all this. I too want peace, because I don’t want the entire race destroyed. Let me do what I can.”

Then he looked at Arjuna who said, “I cannot add anything more to what has already been said by brother Yudhishtira. I doubt whether the Kauravas will welcome your peace efforts. However, nothing is lost by trying. If we don’t get what we want, then war is the only answer.”

Lord Krishna remarked, “Arjuna, as long as Sakuni and Karna advise Duryodhana, he will never see reason. He will not return your territories. He may even think that you are terrified of him, if you persist in your peace offers.”

Both Nakula and Sahadeva voiced the opinion that they should act according to the circumstances. But all agreed that war was inevitable. Sathyaki said, “Sahadeva is right. It’s going to be war



all right. While you are away at Hastinapura, we shall go ahead with our preparations for war." All the other warriors shook their standards and raised war cries at his words.

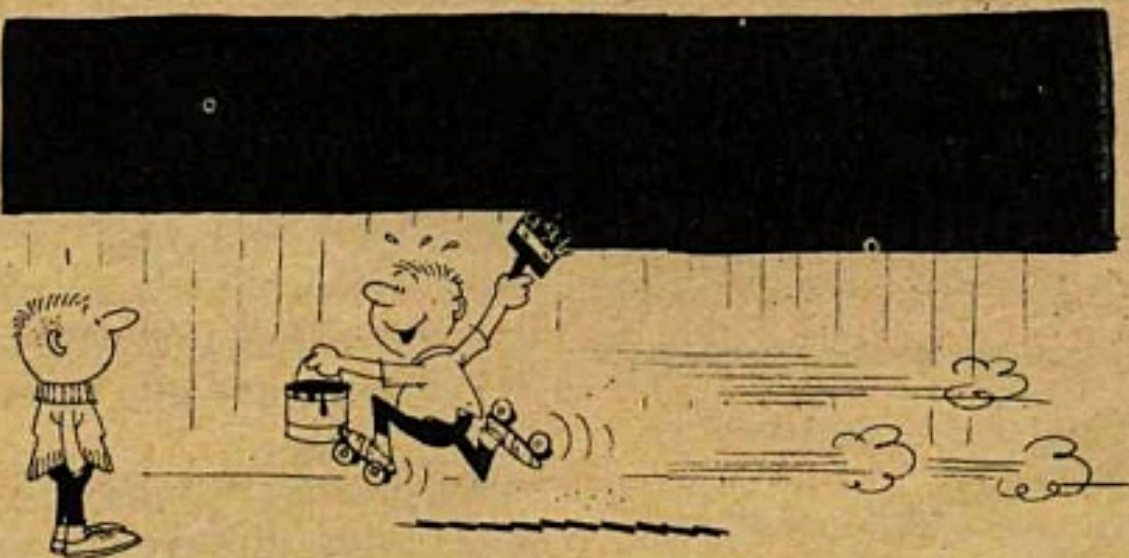
Then Draupadi said to Lord Krishna, "If Duryodhana returns the territories of the Pandavas, it will be peace. If not, it will result in war. The Pandavas can easily kill the Kauravas in battle. Duryodhana who insulted me that day in the court is still alive. I have not yet bound up my hair. You cannot have forgotten my vow! Duhshasana who pulled me by the hair, must have his hand cut off. Then and then only will I be happy."

Lord Krishna consoled her

and prepared to depart for Hastinapura. Then he turned to Sathyaki and observed, "Sathyaki, make ready my spinning wheel, conch shell, mace and other weapons. We can never underestimate Duryodhana and his minions." Thus fully equipped and on his guard Lord Krishna drove towards Hastinapura.

Yudhishtira came to see him off and asked to be reminded to his mother Kunti Devi, Bhishma, Drona, Dhritarashtra, Vidura and Aswathama.

Lord Krishna's chariot sped towards Vrihasthala. The people of that town welcomed him warmly and vied with one another in their hospitality to him.



"Dad bet me I couldn't paint the fence in ten minutes!"





## To Catch a Thief

The King of Manipur presented his lovely daughter with a beautiful necklace studded with precious stones. One day someone stole the necklace. The king was furious and ordered his men to discover the thief. Obviously, someone from the royal palace had stolen the precious jewels.

The minister who was entrusted with the task of finding the thief knew it was useless questioning everyone because no one would own up to the theft. He thought long over this matter and finally came to a conclusion. Accordingly he called three

of his trusted lieutenants and whispered some instructions in their ears.

A little later, all those employed in the palace were asked to gather in the courtyard. The minister came and in a stern voice said, "Someone has stolen the princess's necklace. Come on now, let the thief confess and restore the jewels."

No one spoke and no one came forward. Just then a trader dashed into the presence of the minister and said agitatedly, "Sir, This morning someone stole my money bag which contained five thousand gold pieces. You must help me in recovering my property."

As soon as he finished speaking, a venerable hermit walked in. The minister got up respectfully and addressed the her-

What are invisible, yet never out of sight?

If the Sun had a job, what would it be?

1. The letters I and S. 2. Tanner.



mit "Holy Sir," he said, "Thank God, you've come just in time. To-day, two thefts have taken place in the palace. One, the princess has lost her necklace and two, someone has stolen this merchant's money bag. Let us first recover this merchant's money. Then we shall think of recovering the King's property. I must inform you that both these thefts occurred in the palace."

The hermit heard these words attentively and closed his eyes as if to meditate deeply on the matter. Then he mumbled a few spells and sprinkled water on the essemblage. No sooner was this done then a man in the crowd jumped up as though in pain and rolled on the ground, all the while exclaiming, "Forgive me, Holy Sir, It was I who stole the merchant's money bag. I shall return the money, only relieve me of this terrible

pain."

The minister signalled to two guards and they led the culprit away. Then the hermit looked around and began to speak, "Now we shall come to the affair of the stolen necklace." Before he could continue, a maid serving in the royal chamber fell at his feet and said "Holy Sir, I stole the necklace. Forgive me, for I did not know what I did."

Then she implored the minister's pardon for her evil deed. Thus the necklace was recovered.

Just then, the hermit and the merchant stood revealed in the garb of the minister's trusted henchmen.

The minister applauded them for their excellent acting and said, "Good. Very good. You have done well and shall be rewarded adequately for to day's work."







## Oracular Wisdom

In a certain city there lived a Priest named Kuppu Dikshit who was very poor. He was married and found it difficult to make both ends meet.

Somehow he managed to eke out a living. Frustrated beyond measure, he sought out a fortune teller named Annaswami and asked him to predict his future.

Annaswami after examining his horoscope opined gravely, "Well, Sir, you will become the father of a bonny son and he will bring you great luck."

Kuppu Dikshit was not heartened by this statement. He thought his misery would deepen with an addition to his family. Some months later, true to Annaswami's prediction,

he became the father of a bonny boy. The fond father christened him Satyamoorthy and reared him up with great care. As the lad grew up, Kuppu Dikshit noticed that he had a special quality. The lad had oracular wisdom and his words proved to be right always. His fame spread and many came to him with their questions and received answers which invariably proved to be correct.

One day, Kuppu Dikshit decided to test the truth of his son's oracles. So he asked, "Son, tell me what I have in mind. Will it endure or depart?"

Satyamoorthy replied, "It will depart." Whereupon the father rejoiced because, he had wanted to know whether the



family's poverty would endure or vanish, and his son had said it would not linger any longer.

In fact, Kuppu Dikshit made a lot of money from the correct answers of his son, as those satisfied with the lad's replies usually paid a token fee.

One day Annaswami, the astrologer came to their house and queried Satyamoorthy. "Tell me, will my old mother continue to suffer from her diseases? When will salvation come to her?"

Satyamoorthy replied, "By to-morrow afternoon." The next day, Annaswami's aged mother died.

Soon the King of that land heard about Satyamoorthy's miraculous powers of prophecy. So he sent for father and son. Kuppu Dikshit was overjoyed to receive the royal summons as he thought he would be appointed to some position in the court. But the King gave Satyamoorthy three slips of paper and said, "I understand that your prophecies come true. Well, I have written down three questions on this paper. Write down the answers and we will read them out to the Court."

The King's first question was



whether now he would go to the left or to the right of the throne before sitting on it, or whether he would go straight to the royal chair.

The lad wrote the answer and looked at the King. The King stood where he was and read out the answer. Satyamoorthy had written "The King will not sit on the throne now." Everyone applauded because that proved to be true.

Then the King took the lad to the garden and pointing to a coconut said, "Now lad, tell me, when will that coconut fall?" Satyamoorthy replied, "In a quarter of an hour."

The King asked one of his





men to climb the tree and pluck the coconut but the latter found it difficult going as a lot of ants bit him all over the body. So he came down and propping up a ladder began to climb again. In the meantime, the coconut dropped from the tree. A quarter of an hour had elapsed since the prophecy.

Then the King said, "Well, lad, I shall now pass through the gates of the fort. Write down the method of my entrance into the fort."

Satyamoorthy wrote the answer on a slip of paper and gave it to the King.

The King propped up a ladder against the wall of the fort and

climbed up. But as he was coming down on the other side, he slipped and fell and hurt himself so severely that he could barely walk. So his soldiers had to carry him through a small gate into the fort.

Later the King read out what Satyamoorthy had written on the paper.

"The King will not use any of the normal entrances to the fort. In fact, he will be carried into the fort through a smaller gate," was what Satyamoorthy had written.

The King and the entire court were pleasantly surprised to see that all three questions had been answered correctly.

So the King said, "Satyamoorthy, my lad, you have been well named, because what you say proves to be true always.

Then he rewarded him handsomely and appointed him as a Royal Soothsayer at the court. From that day on, Kuppu Dikshit was freed from the numbing clutches of poverty and lived happily ever afterwards.

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Why is the tail of a dog like the middle of a tree?

Because it is farthest from the bark.





## TRAPPED

Long ago, a scholar named Chiranjiva conducted a gurukula or a School for students in a hermitage.

One day, a man lay dead in front of his hermitage. He had been stabbed to death. Chiranjiva ran to him and drew out the sharp dagger that was sticking out of the heart. Just then someone cried out that Chiranjiva had murdered a man, and soon an inquisitive crowd gathered to gape upon the alleged assassin and the victim.

The soldiers came and arrested Chiranjiva who was taken before King Vallalasena. There was a trial and though witnesses deposed against the hapless scholar the King was not satisfied in his mind about

the guilt of the former.

Chiranjiva declared stoutly that he was innocent. Someone had killed the man and thrown the body before his hermitage. He had merely drawn out the blade to see if he could aid the stricken man.

King Vallalasena pondered over this for sometime and then said, "I now sentence you to death. Do you have a last wish?"

Chiranjiva cried out, "Your Majesty, God alone knows that I am innocent of this crime. But before sentence is carried out upon me I would like to put things in order at my hermitage. For that I need a fortnight's time. Let me perform my duties and I shall come back on the appointed day to





put my head in the hangman's noose."

The King queried, "And who will stand surety for you? Have you anyone who can take your place in prison here?"

Chiranjiva replied, "Your Majesty, I am sorry I have no one who can take my place."

The King mused over this and then said abruptly, "Very well. I permit you to go. But mind, I want you here on the fifteenth day."

Chiranjiva came home, a sorrowing figure and set his house in order, after providing for his wife and children. Then he went into the forest to meditate. On the fourteenth day he

came back to the hermitage and prepared himself for his last journey to take place the next day.

At night, a band of masked men broke into the hermitage and dragged him out. He was blindfolded, put on a horse and taken to an unknown destination. The scholar pleaded with them to release him. "Let me go," he cried out. "To-morrow I must report to the King as promised. It is pointless to kidnap me."

But not a word escaped their lips as the masked men carried him off to their hideout. He was locked up in a dark room and left to reflect on this fresh misfortune.

On the fifteenth day, a neighbour of Chiranjiva came to the King and said, "Your Majesty, see how Chiranjiva has betrayed your trust. He has run off without a word I know all about this base fellow."

The king looked at him keenly and remarked, "Ah! you are a responsible citizen indeed! Now I know who the murderer is. Until we hang the culprit, you must remain here."

Then he told his soldiers to guard the villager and make



sure that he did not escape.

Next morning the City hummed with the news of the impending execution. King Vallalasena ordered his soldiers to bring the villager to the place of the execution. The villager saw the king and enquired anxiously, "Sire, have you caught the murderer? Hang him and make an end of such murderers."

Whereupon the King thundered, "Fellow, why are you so anxious to put an end to Chiranjiva's life? Is it not a fact that you threw the body in front of the hermitage after first killing the man?"

When the villager heard this bold accusation, he began to quake and tremble and his face went pale with fear. Then the king cross-examined him mercilessly and the whole sorry truth came out. It was the neighbour who had committed the

murder and thrown the body in front of the hermitage in order to discredit Chiranjiva. He was a relative of Chiranjiva, but jealousy at the latter's prosperity and popularity had blunted his wits and blinded his eyes. So he had committed that foul murder and cast the blame on Chiranjiva who was luckless to be the first one to discover the crime and had been caught drawing the blade out of the body.

Then some soldiers escorted Chiranjiva into the royal presence. The King looked benignly on Chiranjiva and said, "Sir, Don't be afraid. My soldiers kidnapped you for your own good. I wanted to draw the true murderer out into the open. You are innocent."

Chiranjiva was rewarded handsomely by the King and sent off with all honour. As for his jealous neighbour, he was well and truly hanged.







## THE OLD TREE

Once, many years ago, an old tree grew beside the Lake of Meiringen in Switzerland. As it grew older and older, the branches of the tree drooped lower and lower, as though it were trying to touch the water.

The people of the little town of Meiringen looked at the old tree every time they passed by the Lake. "That old tree is thirsty," they said, "Look at it leaning over, with its branches bending nearer and nearer the water. It must be trying to drink, like an elephant with his trunk, but its branches are not long enough to reach down to the water."



The Mayor and all the Councilmen felt sorry for the tree whenever they passed by and finally the Mayor said, "That tree is trying so hard to reach the water that we must help it."

One Sunday, all the people of Meiringen turned out and marched to the Lake. At their head were the Mayor and all the Councilmen and the noisy village band.

When they reached the tree everyone stopped.

Then the Mayor took off his coat and hat and climbed up to the highest branch of the tree. Then he called to the President of the Council to climb up as well.

The President did so and he hung on to the Mayor's legs. Then the Vice-President climbed up and hung on to the President's legs. The First Councilman climbed up and hung on to the Vice-President's legs and so it went on, until it came to the turn of the Seventh Councilman. His feet were

dangling near the ground, so he called to all the people who were standing around the tree, "Now, everyone grab my legs and pull until the tree bends down and touches the water. Then it will be able to have a good drink."

Just at that moment, the Mayor called down from the top, "Wait a minute. Let me spit on my hands first, so that I have a good grip and don't let go when you all pull."

The Mayor let go the branch he was holding so that he could spit on his hands. There was a sudden tremendous splash! Instead of the tree, all the Town Councilmen of Meiringen had a good drink in the Lake, for as soon as the Mayor let go the branch, they all dropped into the water.

Sadly, they crawled out of the Lake and all the Town Council followed the Mayor, dripping wet, back to Meiringen to dry off, with the band silently bringing up the rear.

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## Playing it right...

We played a cricket match in school today Daddy. But I got out very soon.

Why son, what happened?



Sunil bowled a short ball. I tried to cut, but edged a catch to the wicket-keeper.



Bad luck! But there are other strokes to deal with short balls. For instance, you can play the hook. Move to your right so that the ball comes high up at your left. Hit with an upward swing of the bat.



And if you hit with full force you will swing round completely. You may even find yourself facing the wicket-keeper!



Now then, it's nearly eight-thirty, son. Off to bed. Have you brushed your teeth?

I washed my mouth after dinner, Dad.



That won't do son. You must brush your teeth every night and morning, to remove all decay-causing food particles. You must also massage the gums, so they'll be healthy and strong.



Yes, Daddy.



Come, let's both brush our teeth with Forhan's toothpaste.



**Forhan's**  
the toothpaste  
created by  
a dentist





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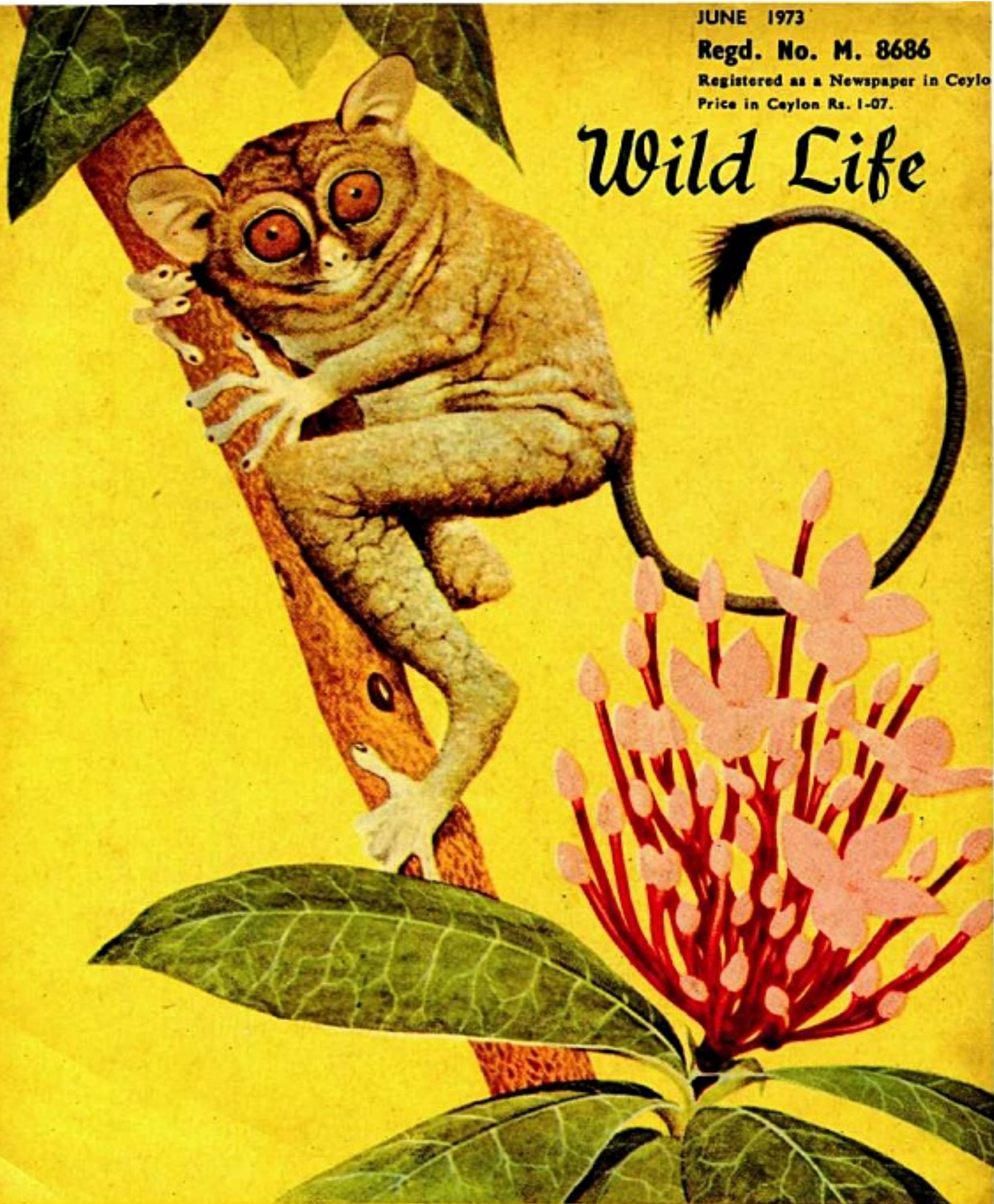
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# Wild Life



**T**

for Tarsier the little fellow of the Far East with the enormous eyes. He only measures about six inches long and only wakes during the dark night hours.